

Frequently Asked Questions about Business Recycling

What happens if a business doesn't recycle?

Rather than immediately penalize businesses that do not conform to the law, Waukesha County prefers to assist those uncertain about how to comply with the law by providing specific information and suggestions on how to get started. The County, however, will respond to complaints and conduct random inspections.

Those who do not comply with recycling may be subject to fines, which are outlined in County Code-Chapter 26, Article III. Those who violate the rules may be fined at least \$50 for the first violation, at least \$100 for the second, and up to \$500 for each subsequent violation.

How do I start a recycling program?

Talk with your trash hauler. If you have a contract, check the renewal date and the renewal clause for terms and conditions. Because a variety of local haulers offer commercial recycling collection, business owners may want to exercise the notification period built into most standard contracts to contact several haulers. Compare your current hauler's rates and services with those of other vendors.

Also, you may wish to check municipal requirements for position and/or enclosure of outdoor disposal containers, as well as any requirements relating to indoor storage of recyclables. Ask to see local trash and recycling ordinances, building and fire codes.

How do I prepare my recyclables?

Talk with your waste hauler, since this will vary. Generally, you will use a separate container for paper and corrugated cardboard, a second container for cans and bottles, and a third container for trash.

What if an unauthorized person uses my trash or recycling dumpster?

It is illegal for anyone to dispose of waste in a dumpster without the owner's consent. We recommend that you place a sign on the dumpster stating this to deter people from putting their refuse in your dumpster. Also, consider requesting a locking system from your hauler.

How can I reduce my recycling and garbage costs?

To keep costs down, you may wish to look into cooperative recycling. If your business is small, join with other businesses to increase your volume of recyclables. Increased volume will have more market value to recyclers. It will decrease their transportation costs and make servicing your businesses more worthwhile.

You may want to contact your trade group, local chamber of commerce, or business association to begin a cooperative trash or recycling program or to find out about existing programs.

The County can also direct you to several resources that will help make your recycling program cost efficient and effective. These include private companies and drop-off sites that accept recyclables delivered to them. Taking your own recyclable items to a drop-off site may be a good option for some companies.

What are my responsibilities as the owner of a multi-family dwelling?

Multi-family recycling differs from single home residential programs because building managers must work with waste haulers to develop recycling programs that suit the available space, that are accessible, and that meet the needs of the residents.

If you don't have a program in place yet, you must initiate one to be in compliance with the law. Tenants will likely be asking you specific questions about where they should put their recyclables.

If you need assistance or have questions about the law, or if you would like posters, lease addenda, or other printed information about recycling, contact Waukesha County's Business Recycling Specialist (262) 896-8300.



For more information about any of these topics, to request printed literature, or to request a waste assessment for your facility, please contact Waukesha County Department of Parks and Land Use/Recycling and Solid Waste Office at (262) 896-8300.

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Business Guide to Recycling in Waukesha County

Including Information About:

- > Waukesha County Recycling Ordinance
- > Resources For Successful Recycling Programs
- > Frequently Asked Questions



***Waukesha County
Department of Parks and Land Use
Recycling and Solid Waste Office
(262) 896-8300
www.waukeshacounty.gov/recycling***

Why should I recycle?

It makes good business sense to reduce waste. The County Solid Waste Management Plan estimates that each year, Waukesha County businesses produce over 200,000 tons of solid waste— more than half of the total waste generated in the County.

Recycling offers many advantages:

- It can decrease your disposal costs
- It saves landfill space
- It provides feedstock for new products
- It saves energy and resources
- It creates a positive image for your business within the community

Recycling is required under Wisconsin Law and Waukesha County Code:

The owner of a commercial, institutional, industrial, governmental, retail, or multiple-family facility or property must:

- Provide adequate, separate containers for recyclable materials (see list on the right)
- Provide for the collection and delivery of separated materials
- Notify tenants at the time of renting or leasing that they must separate banned items (see list on the right). They must also remind tenants of this at least twice per year.

*The ordinance also states that **occupants and users** of such facilities must:*

- Separate banned items (see list on the right) from their other waste materials.

Items that must be recycled...

The following items are banned from Wisconsin landfills by law.

- Aluminum containers
- Corrugated cardboard
- Glass containers
- Lead acid vehicle batteries
- Magazines or other materials printed on similar paper
- Newspapers or other materials printed on similar paper
- Office paper
- Old appliances
- Plastic containers* (labeled #1 and #2)
- Steel containers
- Tires (incineration allowed only for energy recovery purposes)
- Used motor oil
- Yard waste



** Due to a lack of markets, #3-#7 plastics are not recyclable at this time per a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources variance.*

Resources to help you with your program:

Waukesha County has several publications and resources available to help you implement or improve your business' recycling program. Visit www.waukeshacounty.gov/recycling or call (262) 896-8300 for more information on the following topics:

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| 🌐 <i>Agriculture and Business Hazardous Waste</i> | 🌐 <i>Sector-Specific Waste Reduction Information (Lodging, Office/Workplace, Restaurants, Special Events, Apartments)</i> |
| 🌐 <i>Communicating With Your Waste Hauler</i> | |
| 🌐 <i>Energy Conservation</i> | 🌐 <i>Special Waste Disposal & Recycling Options</i> |
| 🌐 <i>Starting a Commercial Recycling Program</i> | 🌐 <i>Small Business Recycling</i> |
| 🌐 <i>Mercury Waste</i> | 🌐 <i>Waste Assessments: Reduce waste and disposal costs by assessing your business' waste output</i> |
| 🌐 <i>Office Equipment/Computer Recycling</i> | 🌐 <i>Waukesha County Recycling Ordinance</i> |
| 🌐 <i>Private Recycling Centers and Haulers</i> | |

On-line Resources

Business Materials Exchange of Wisconsin ~ www.bmex.org

Matches manufacturers and other businesses that need materials with companies that have reusable, surplus or by-product materials available.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Business Recycling Related Publications ~ www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/wm/publications/
Recycling Markets Directory ~ www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/wm/Markets/introduction.html



Wisconsin Focus on Energy ~ www.focusonenergy.com/

An innovative program designed to help you bring energy savings to your home, business and community.

WasteCap Wisconsin, Inc. ~ www.wastecapwi.org

Providing waste reduction and recycling assistance through demonstration, education and networking for the benefit of businesses and the environment.

Wisconsin Buy Recycled Business Alliance ~ www.buyrecycled.org

Supports "closing the loop" by encouraging businesses to use products that contain recycled material, thus creating a market for recycled products and recycling in general.

Business for Social Responsibility ~ www.bsr.org

An organization of companies dedicated to commercial success through respect for the environment.